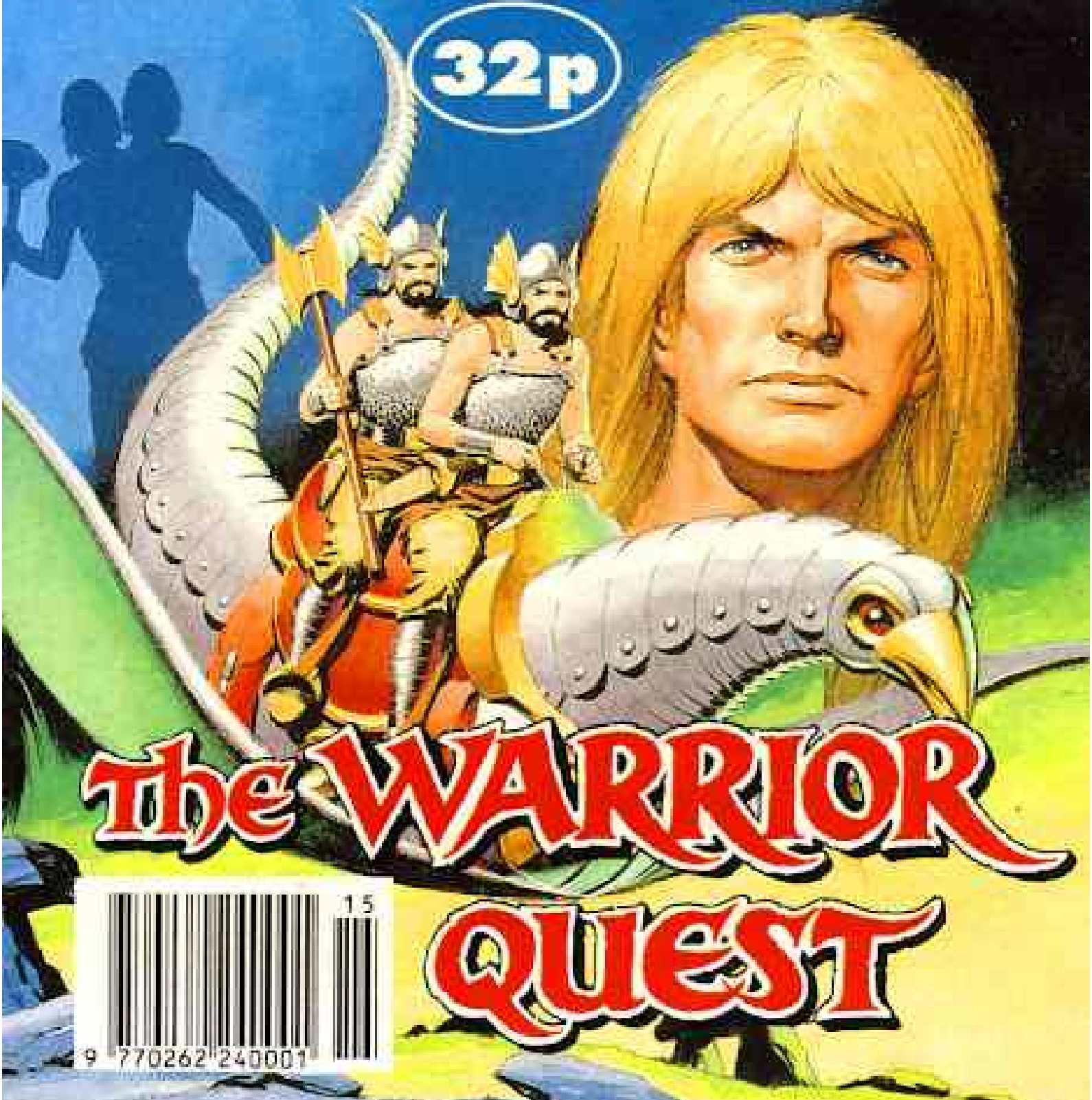
STARBLAZER

FANTASY FICTION IN PICTURES No. 270

32p



The WARRIOR QUEST

9 770262 240001 15

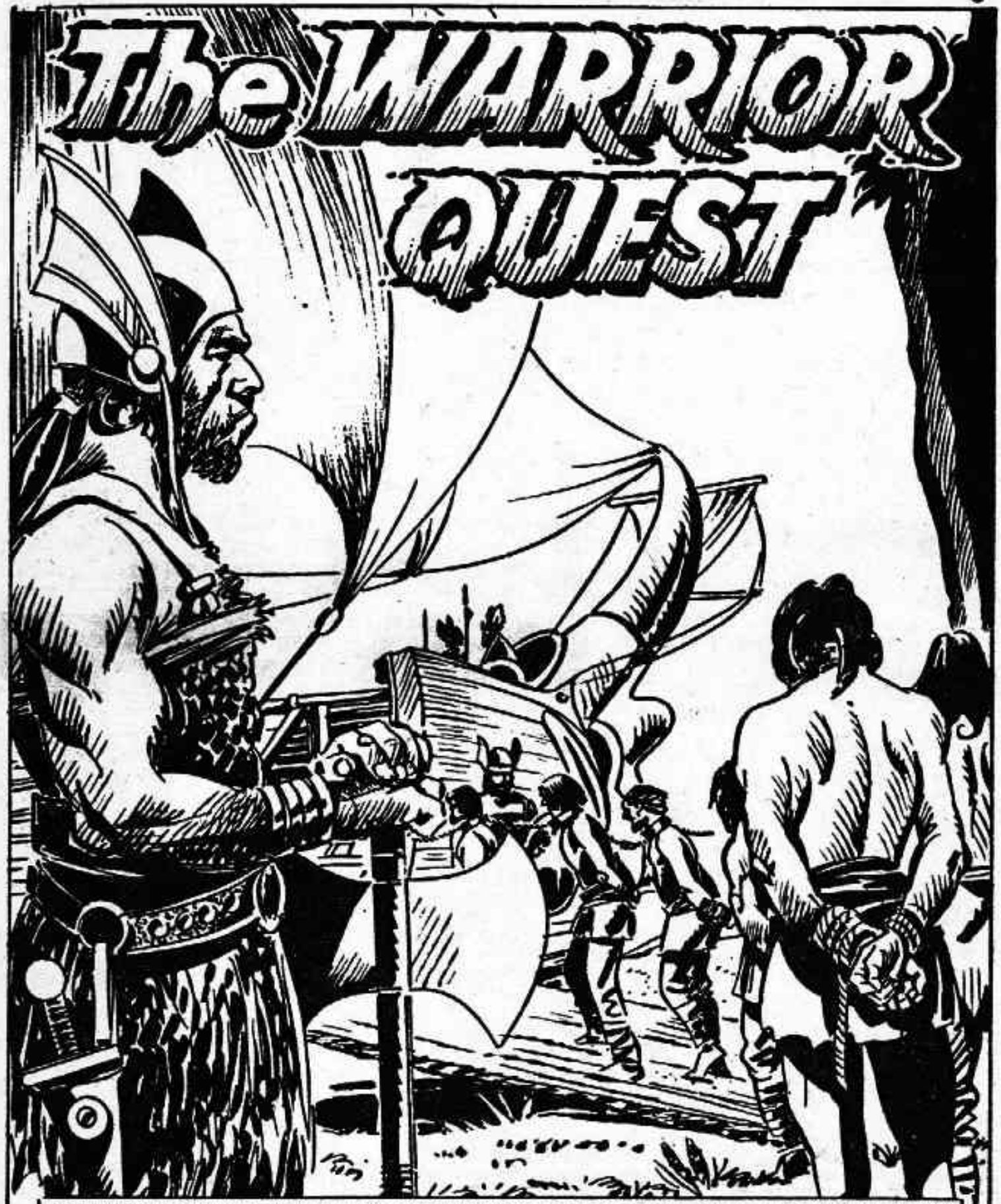
STARBLAZER...

THE DEFINITIVE HISTORY

By 1981, Starblazer, now firmly established, attracted still more young writers, Mike Knowles and Dave Taylor to name but two. The ever-inventive Alcatena remained the mainstay on the art side, ably backed up by Ortiz. The covers were fairly evenly divided between agency transparencies and commissioned work. The cover shown was painted by Mike Cox.

No.	TITLE	AUTHOR	ARTIST
40	THE PLANET TAMER	G. P. RICE	ORTIZ
41	ASSAULT ON PLANET DESTRA	R. ASPDEN	FERRER
42	THE IMMORTALS	M. STALL	SAICHANN
43	NOWHERE WORLD	ALAN ROGERS	ALAN ROGERS
44	CAVERNS OF OBLIVION	R. ASPDEN	MONTERO
45	OPERATION OVERKILL	G. MORRISON	ALCATENA
46	BLINDWORLD	J. RADFORD	ORTIZ
47	ANDROMEDA INCIDENT	C. SHELBOURN	ALCATENA
48	KING ROBOT	M. GORTON	FERRER
49	RIGEL EXPRESS	W. REED	ALCATENA
50	MOONSPLITTER	R. ASPDEN	SAICHANN
51	THE PRISONERS OF ZORR	P. DUNN	SAROMPAS
52	THE MASK OF FEAR	M. STALL	MONTERO
53	SAMURAI WARRIOR	M. KNOWLES	SAICHANN
54	THE TORTURER OF TRITON II	R. ASPDEN	ALCATENA
55	TARGET EARTH	T. STENT	PINO
56	SLEEPING LEGION	S. NEELD	ALCATENA
57	GALACTIC LAWMAN...	G. P. RICE	ORTIZ
58	PYRAMID POWER	M. CHAPPELL	URBEZ
59	STARSEEKER SQUAD	W. REED	ALCATENA
60	THE MEGAKILLERS	ALAN ROGERS	PINO
61	ESCAPE FROM DEVIL'S MOON	D. H. TAYLOR	ORTIZ
62	TERROR TOMB	R. ASPDEN	ALCATENA
63	LORDS OF THE WILDERNESS	C. SHELBOURN	MARTINEZ

The WARRIOR QUEST



LIFE WAS HARD IN THE MIDDLELANDS. UNDER THE RULE OF BALDAR THE CRUEL, THE POPULATION WAS RUTHLESSLY EXPLOITED. MOST ADULT MALES WERE SOLD INTO SLAVERY, AND THOSE THAT REMAINED WERE WORKED AND TAXED SO HEAVILY THAT THEY COULD SCARCELY AFFORD TO EAT.

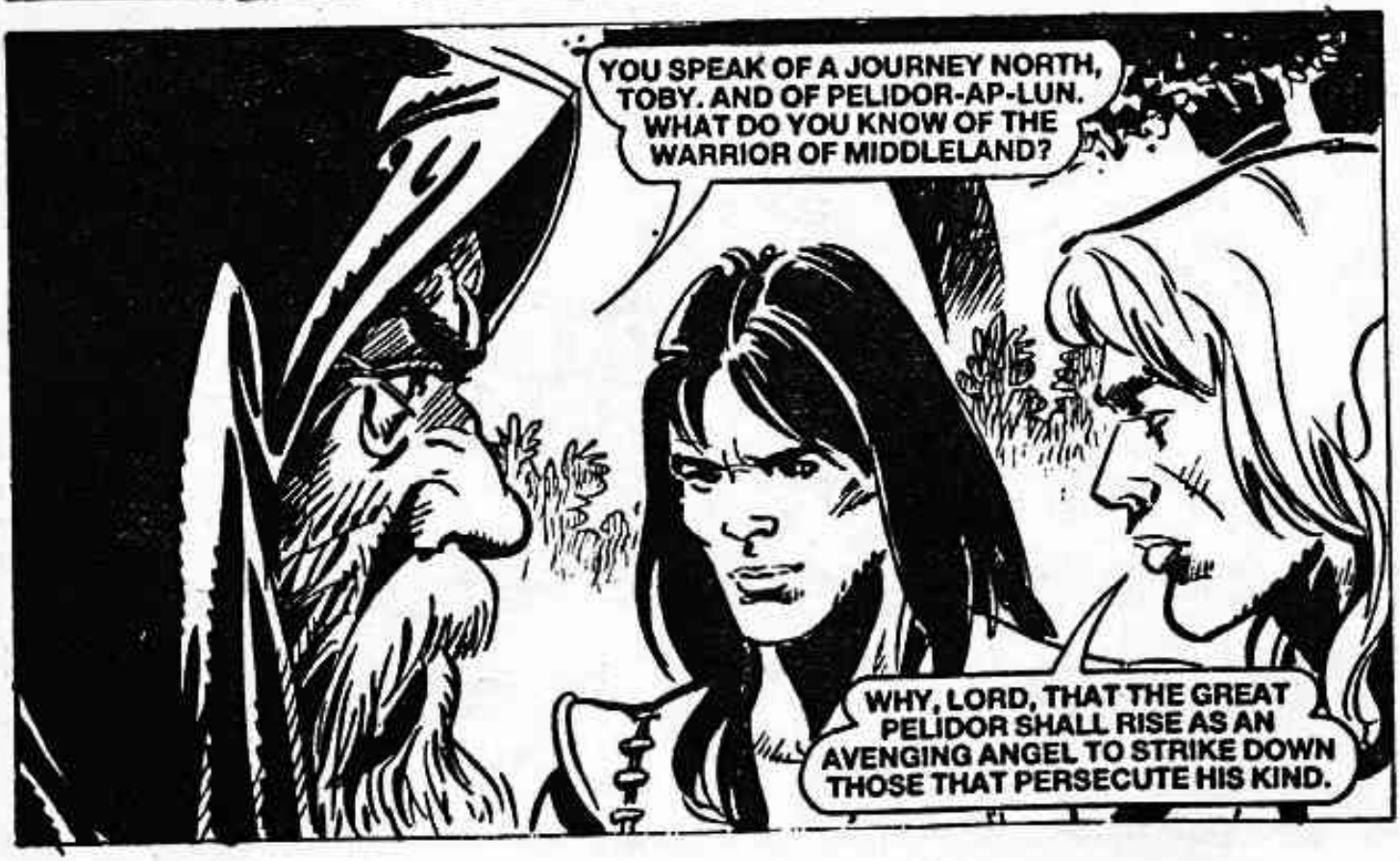
THEY TAKE MORE MEN FROM OUR VILLAGE, JEDD. SOON THERE WILL BE NO MEN LEFT. IT MUST BE STOPPED!
QUIET, TOBY. YOU NEVER KNOW WHO IS LISTENING! THERE ARE SPIES ALL OVER THE PLACE!
SPIES WERE WELL REWARDED, AND EXEMPT FROM THE SLAVE MARKETS.

THE TWO YOUTHS HAD PLENTY TO WORRY ABOUT — SOON THEY WOULD BE EIGHTEEN AND IN THE MIDDLELANDS THAT WASN'T A BAD DAY FOR CELEBRATION.
MY MOTHER SAYS THAT IT IS BETTER TO STAY AND TAKE THE INITIATION . . . FATHER DID, AND HE'S HAPPY.
PERHAPS . . . BUT THE INITIATION DESTROYED HIS MIND. WELL, I DON'T INTEND TO FOLLOW, JEDD.
THE YOUTHS' RADICAL TALK WAS HEARD.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, TOBY?
I AM NOT HAVING MY BRAINS SCRAMBLED ON INITIATION DAY. I'M OFF. AND IF YOU HAVE ANY GUTS YOU'LL COME WITH ME . . .

. . . WE CAN GO NORTH, BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS. I HAVE HEARD THINGS. ABOUT STRANGE THINGS, AND ABOUT PELIDOR . . .
BRAVE WORDS, MY YOUNG FRIENDS!
WHAT THE . . . ?

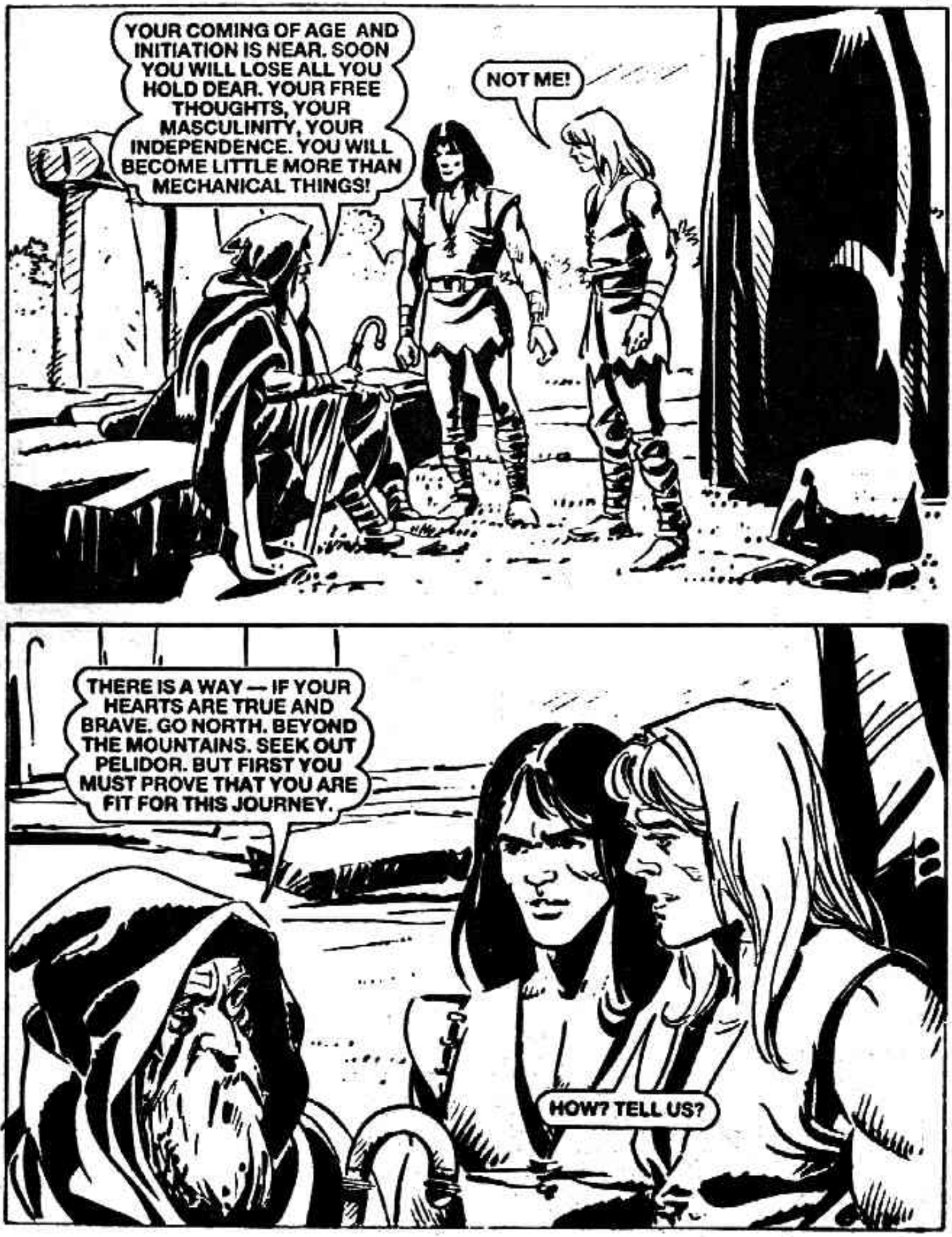
WHO ARE YOU?
I AM KARSTEN, A MENTOR. YOU ARE JEDD OF VENSON, AND YOUR FRIEND IS TOBY OF MANNLIEM.
THE YOUNG MEN STARED AT THE FIGURE . . . A MENTOR, A SEER FROM OLD MIDDLELAND. IT WAS WRITTEN THAT SEERS ONLY APPEARED TO THOSE WHO HAD IN THEM GREATNESS.


YOU SPEAK OF A JOURNEY NORTH, TOBY. AND OF PELIDOR-AP-LUN. WHAT DO YOU KNOW OF THE WARRIOR OF MIDDLELAND?
WHY, LORD, THAT THE GREAT PELIDOR SHALL RISE AS AN AVENGING ANGEL TO STRIKE DOWN THOSE THAT PERSECUTE HIS KIND.

IT IS SAID THAT HE IS IMPRISONED SOMEWHERE IN THE NORTHLAND. FROZEN IN STONE FOR ETERNITY BY A SORCERER'S ENCHANTMENT.
TOBY — LOOK AT THAT BIRD! IT'S ONE OF BALDAR'S SPY CREATURES!
IT WILL REPORT BACK TO BALDAR! WE ARE DONE FOR!
I THINK NOT!
WHAT MAGIC IS THIS?
WHUMP!

THE MENTOR COMMANDED THE TWO YOUTHS TO FOLLOW HIM, THEN PLUNGED DEEPER INTO THE WOOD.
TOBY, THIS IS STUPIDITY! WE WILL BE CAUGHT AND SENT INTO SLAVERY.
I THINK NOT!

THIS CIRCLE OF STONES WILL PROTECT US FROM BALDAR'S SNOOPERS — FOR THE MOMENT! ALAS IT IS MUCH NEGLECTED, AND ITS POWER WEAK. SO I MUST BE BRIEF.


YOUR COMING OF AGE AND INITIATION IS NEAR. SOON YOU WILL LOSE ALL YOU HOLD DEAR. YOUR FREE THOUGHTS, YOUR MASCULINITY, YOUR INDEPENDENCE. YOU WILL BECOME LITTLE MORE THAN MECHANICAL THINGS!
NOT ME!
THERE IS A WAY — IF YOUR HEARTS ARE TRUE AND BRAVE. GO NORTH. BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS. SEEK OUT PELIDOR. BUT FIRST YOU MUST PROVE THAT YOU ARE FIT FOR THIS JOURNEY.
HOW? TELL US?

I WILL KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT BEFORE THE DAY IS DONE.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
WHY DON'T YOU GO AND FREE PELIDOR — IF HE STILL EXISTS!

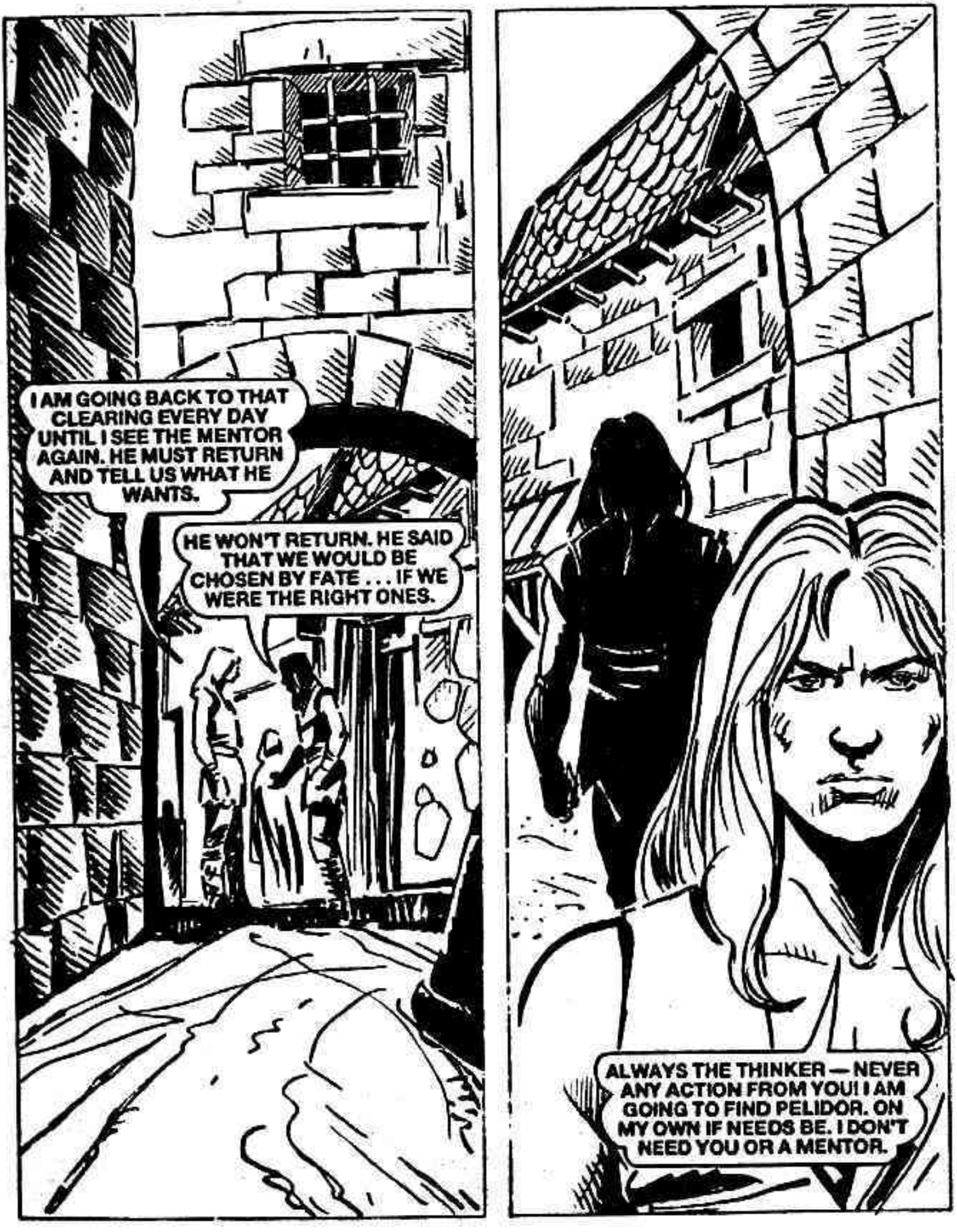
I CANNOT FREE PELIDOR — THE ETERNAL WARRIOR. FOR HE WAS IMPRISONED BY MEN OF MIDDLELAND, AND HE CAN ONLY BE FREED BY MEN OF MIDDLELAND. BY WARRIORS OF VALOUR AND TRUTH. IF YE BE THE MEN, THEN YOU WILL BE CHOSEN BY FATE. I AM NOT OF THIS LAND AND CAN HELP LITTLE.

HE'S GOING!
HOW DO WE PROVE WE ARE WARRIORS?

THERE IS MUCH EVIL OUTSIDE THE CIRCLE. I CANNOT STAY. WORRY NOT . . . I SHALL ASSIST YOU.
A VOICE IN MY HEAD! WHERE IS HE?

TOBY AND JEDD MADE THEIR WAY BACK TO TOWN. IT WAS TAX DAY, AND BALDAR'S COLLECTORS WERE OUT IN FORCE.
LOOK, BALDAR'S SCUM ARE ROBBING OUR PEOPLE — AND NOBODY WILL STAND AGAINST THEM.
AND NOR SHALL WE!

STAND ASIDE, PEASANTS!
ONE DAY I WON'T STAND ASIDE!
WHAT DID YOU SAY, BOY?
HE SAID ONE DAY HE WOULDN'T HAVE TO STAND ASIDE BECAUSE HE DESIRES TO BECOME A KNIGHT LIKE YOU.
A HAWK KNIGHT, EH? SOON HE WILL NOT HAVE A THOUGHT OF HIS OWN IN HIS LITTLE HEAD. HA! HA!
THAT MOUTH OF YOURS WILL GET US BOTH KILLED.


I AM GOING BACK TO THAT CLEARING EVERY DAY UNTIL I SEE THE MENTOR AGAIN. HE MUST RETURN AND TELL US WHAT HE WANTS.
HE WON'T RETURN. HE SAID THAT WE WOULD BE CHOSEN BY FATE . . . IF WE WERE THE RIGHT ONES.
ALWAYS THE THINKER — NEVER ANY ACTION FROM YOU! I AM GOING TO FIND PELIDOR. ON MY OWN IF NEEDS BE. I DON'T NEED YOU OR A MENTOR.

JEDD APPPROACHED HIS HOME—
I CANNOT GO! THERE IS MUCH WORK TO BE DONE, IF WE ARE EVER TO PAY THIS YEAR'S TAXES.

BUT BEFORE HE REACHED HIS HOME—
HAWKS! THEY ARE TAKING MY BROTHER TO BALDAR'S KEEP.

RUN, BROTHER, RUN!
WHAT THE . . . ?
OUT OF THE WAY, BOY!
DON'T, JEDD — THEY WILL ONLY TAKE YOU AS WELL!
I CAN NO LONGER STAND THIS. I MUST GO!

MOTHER, TAKE MY SISTER AND GO SOMEWHERE SAFE. I MUST LEAVE, BUT I CANNOT TELL YOU WHEN OR WHERE.
BUT, JEDD, YOU CANNOT LEAVE — IT IS FORBIDDEN. IN A WEEK YOU MUST PREPARE FOR THE INITIATION.

NO, MOTHER! I HAVE NO INTENTION OF BEING INITIATED! FATHER HAS BEEN BROKEN BY YEARS OF TOIL, I SHALL NOT BE THE SAME.

SUDDENLY, TWO OF BALDAR'S HAWKS FLOATED INTO VIEW ASTRIDE AN ANMECH, THEIR PRIMITIVE FLYING MACHINE.
THERE IS THE AGITATOR — TAKE HIM!
JEDD — OH, WHAT HAVE YOU DONE.
NOTHING YET! I MUST RUN, MOTHER — FOR MY LIFE.

JEDD DID NOT KNOW WHICH WAY TO GO — BUT INSTINCT AND FEAR DROVE HIM ON.

TOBY HEARD THE DESPERATE FLIGHT, LITTLE REALISING IT WAS JEDD—
SOMEBODY COMING— I MUST HIDE!

HE'S DOWN! TAKE HIM!
IT'S JEDD! AND THE HAWKS ARE AFTER HIM! I MUST HELP HIM!

THAT'S FAR ENOUGH!

NOW FOR THE OTHER ONE!

DIE, YOU ACCURSED BRUTE!

SO WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER. PERHAPS WE CAN USE THE ANMECH.
WE DO NOT HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE.

A VOICE MADE THEM JUMP.
FEAR NOT, FOR I SHALL ASSIST YOU!
WHAT THE . . .!

YOU SET ALL THIS UP?
ME? WOULD I RISK LIFE!

NAY, JEDD THE DOUBTER. THE CRUELTY OF BALDAR SET THESE EVENTS IN MOTION. BUT YOUR REACTION TO THEM WAS OF YOUR OWN DOING. NOW YOU MUST CHOOSE TO RIDE AGAINST BALDAR'S REIGN OR FALL UNDER HIS TYRANNY FOREVER.
FEAR NOT! WE SHALL GO. I CANNOT GO BACK.

THE TWO YOUTHS CLIMBED ABOARD THE ANMECH.
WE GO . . . YOU SAID YOU WOULD HELP!
TELL THE MACHINE WHERE YOU WANT TO GO, IT WILL FOLLOW SPOKEN DIRECTIONS.

REMEMBER, IN THE NORTHERN LANDS AND BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS YOU WILL FIND PELIDOR. BUT I DO NOT KNOW WHERE. I CANNOT COME WITH YOU, FOR I HAVE MUCH TO DO HERE. YOU WILL FIND BOTH ALLIES AND ENEMIES ON YOUR JOURNEY — BEWARE!

AT BALDAR'S COURT, THE HAWK THAT TOBY KNOCKED OUT HAD RECOVERED AND WAS REPORTING IN.
YOU LET TWO IGNORANT, UNEDUCATED SCUM ESCAPE IN YOUR ANMECH! I'LL DEAL WITH YOU LATER.
THEY HAD THE ASSISTANCE OF A MENTOR!

WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THIS, COUNSELLER.
THERE HAS BEEN TALK RECENTLY ABOUT THE SIGHTING OF A MENTOR — AND TALK OF PELIDOR. WE MUST CRUSH THOSE BEHIND THIS DANGEROUS TALK.

PAH! PELIDOR . . . A LEGEND THOUGHT UP BY IGNORANT PEASANTS TO GIVE THEM SOME COMFORT.
PERHAPS, BUT THE PEOPLE BELIEVE IN HIM.

AYE . . . YOU ARE RIGHT! BRING ME BACK THE HEADS OF THESE YOUTHS.

THE TWO YOUTHS HAD FINALLY MASTERED THE ANMECH.
THE FOREST OF KANDON. THEY SAY THAT SOMEWHERE IN THE MIDDLE IS A VAST CASTLE WITH A SLEEPING ARMY.
IT'S GETTING DARK! LET'S FIND SOMEWHERE TO LAND.

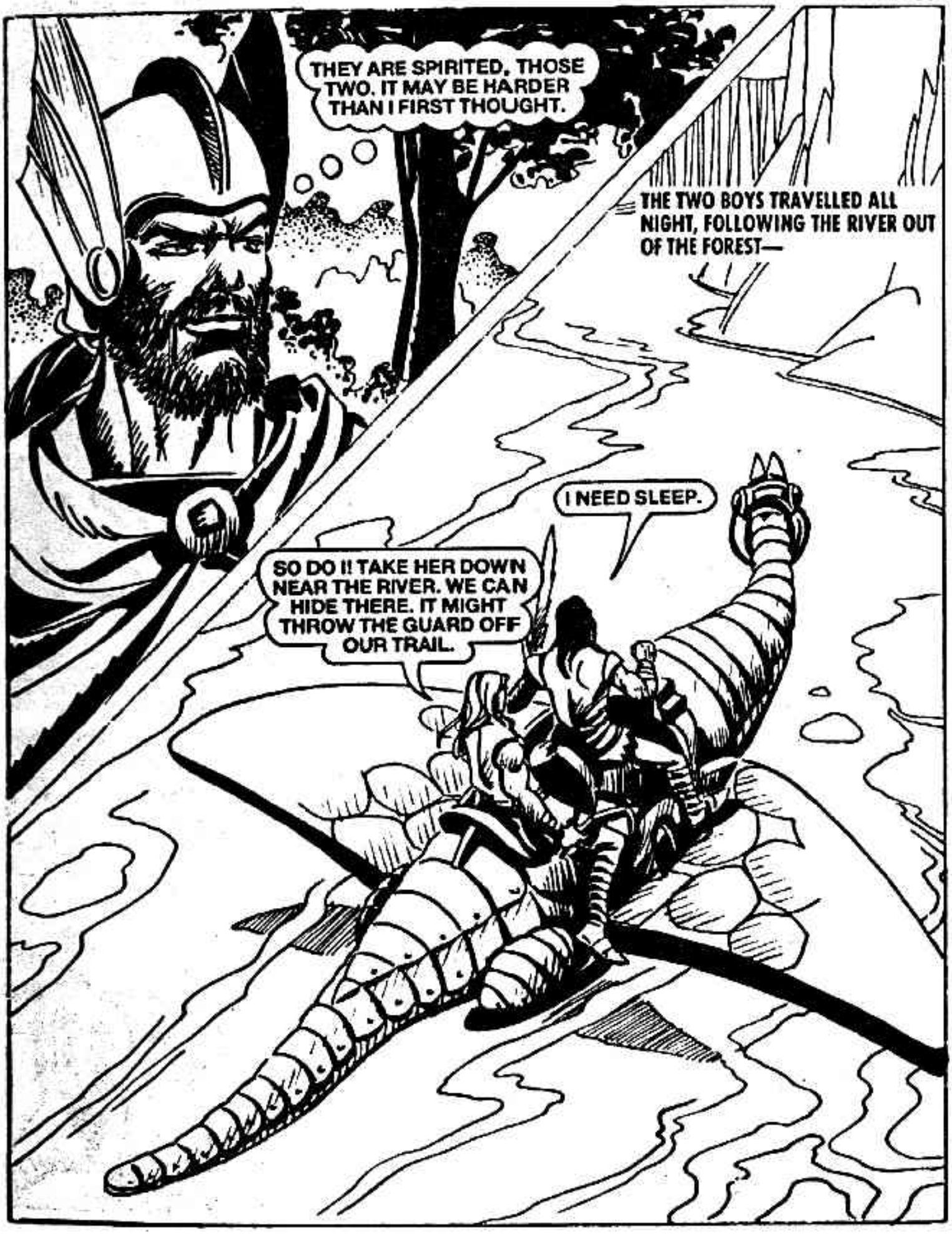
ONE BUMPY LANDING LATER—
THIS PLACE WILL DO, JEDD.
I LIKE IT NOT. IT HAS AN AIR OF EVIL!
THERE'S SOME FOOD HERE, AND A CROSSBOW.
SSSHH! I THOUGHT I HEARD SOMETHING.

JEDD HAD HEARD SOMETHING. FOR JUST OUT OF SIGHT WAS THE MUCH FEARED ANMECH OF THE IMMORTAL GUARD, LED BY HAGEN SKULL-CRACKER, A BRUTAL WARRIOR.
QUIETLY, FOOL. WE WANT THEM ALIVE. LUMMOG SAYS THEY MAY KNOW WHERE PELIDOR IS.

AS THE GUARD CREPT CLOSER, ONE OF THEM DISTURBED A WILD PIG. NOT THE QUIETEST OF ANIMALS WHEN DISTURBED.
GRUNT! GRUNT!
YOU IDIOT! NOW MOVE — ON THEN.

A PIG! THERE'S SOMETHING OUT THERE, JEDD!
GET ON THE ANMECH, QUICKLY.

MY OATH, THE IMMORTAL GUARD!
GET MOVING!
AN ESCAPE WAS MADE—
YAH! THEY AREN'T VERY IMMORTAL AT ALL!
STAND YOUR GROUND! COWARDS!


THEY ARE SPIRITED, THOSE TWO. IT MAY BE HARDER THAN I FIRST THOUGHT.
THE TWO BOYS TRAVELLED ALL NIGHT, FOLLOWING THE RIVER OUT OF THE FOREST—
I NEED SLEEP.
SO DO I! TAKE HER DOWN NEAR THE RIVER. WE CAN HIDE THERE. IT MIGHT THROW THE GUARD OFF OUR TRAIL.

NO SOONER HAD THEY TOUCHED DOWN—
LOOK!
THEY MUST BE HERE SOMEWHERE. KEEP LOOKING, YOU IMBECILES!

I HOPE WE FIND PELIDOR SOON. THE GUARD WON'T GIVE UP.
YES — IT'S A RACE AGAINST TIME.

IN THE LATE AFTERNOON—
I HEAR VOICES, TOBY, WAKE UP!
EH . . . WHAT?
TODAY, WITCH, YOU DIE.
THEY ARE GOING TO KILL HER!
OH, NO THEY AREN'T.

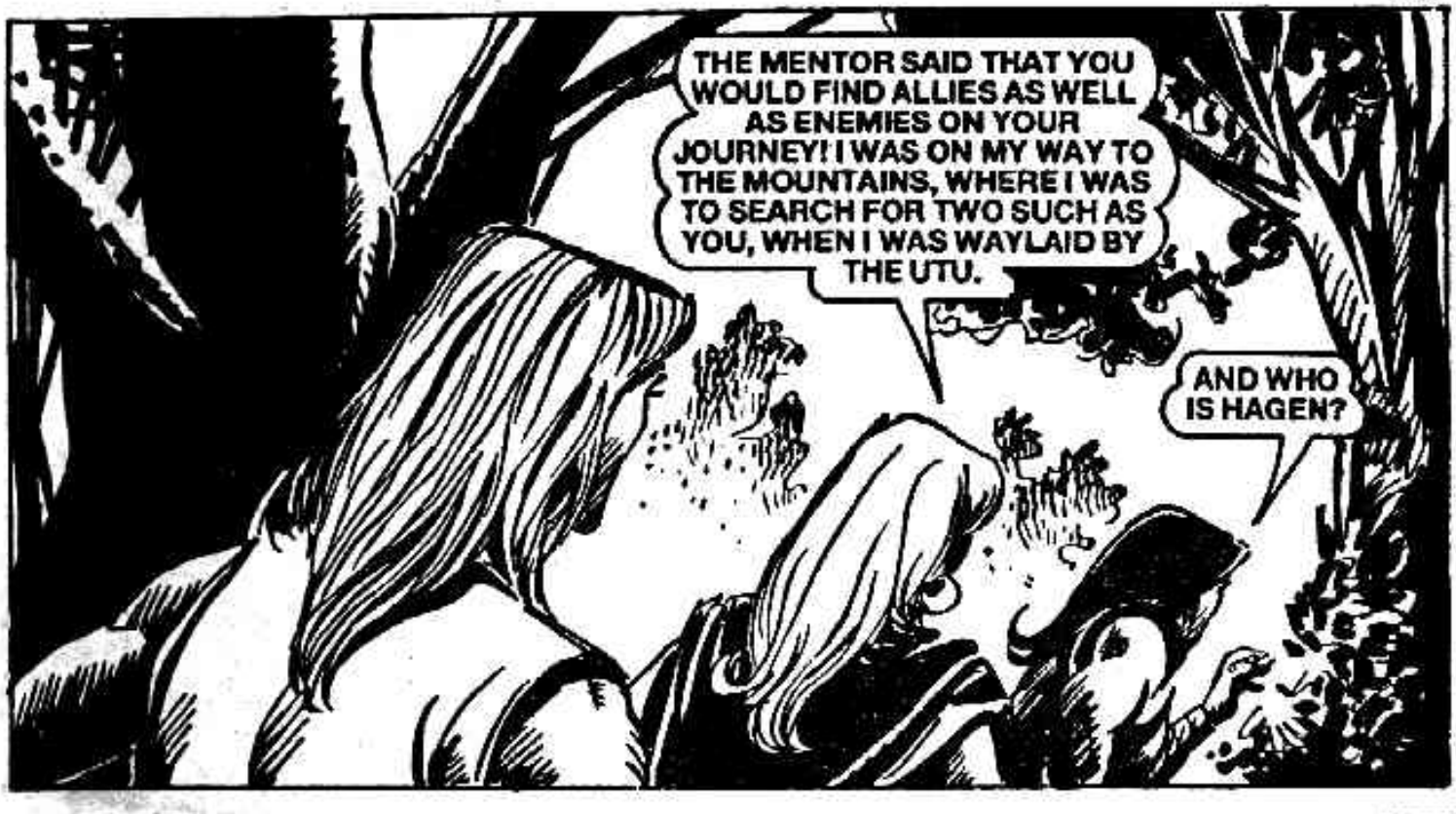
GET AWAY FROM HER,YOU UGLY BRUTES!

MIDDLELANDERS! THANK YOU. THANK YOU. MY STAFF PLEASE. YOU HAVE SCARED OFF THOSE COWARDLY CREATURES.

I AM KNOWN AS ELEKA, THE FIRE-WOMAN. THOSE THAT WOULD KILL ME ARE UTU MEN IN THE PAY OF EO.
THEY CALLED YOU A — A WITCH — IS THIS TRUE?

YES, I AM A WITCH! BUT MY ENEMY AND YOURS IS THE NECROMANCER, EO. HE WAS A SERVANT OF THE ANCESTORS OF BALDAR. IT IS HE WHO TRICKED AND TRAPPED THE CHAMPION, PELIDOR.
STAY WHERE YOU ARE.
MORE EXPLANATION WAS CUT SHORT BY THE ARRIVAL OF HAGEN—
IT'S BALDAR'S IMMORTAL GUARD, ELEKA — RUN FOR IT.

NO . . . I RUN NOT FROM THUGS.
A FIRE STAFF — LIKE THE MENTOR'S.
WE CAN GET AWAY ON THE ANMECHI
NO! THEY ARE TOO EASILY TRACED. HOW ELSE DO YOU THINK YOU WERE FOUND? I HAVE HORSES NOT FAR FROM HERE. COME, HAGEN WILL NOT TROUBLE US FOR THE MOMENT.


THE MENTOR SAID THAT YOU WOULD FIND ALLIES AS WELL AS ENEMIES ON YOUR JOURNEY! I WAS ON MY WAY TO THE MOUNTAINS, WHERE I WAS TO SEARCH FOR TWO SUCH AS YOU, WHEN I WAS WAYLAID BY THE UTU.
AND WHO IS HAGEN?

HAGEN KILLS FOR THE LOVE OF IT. HE WILL NOT GIVE UP THIS CHASE UNTIL YOU TWO ARE DEAD!

PELIDOR IS NO LEGEND! THESE ARE NO ORDINARY ANIMALS, MY FRIENDS. THEY ARE SIRED BY THE GREAT HORSE, WIND, PELIDOR'S MIGHTY STALLION. THEY WILL GUIDE YOU.

MEANWHILE HAGEN WAS RECOVERING FROM A BAD LANDING.
NOW WHAT DO WE DO?
THERE IS A HAWK OUTPOST HALF A DAY'S MARCH FROM HERE. WE WILL GET HORSES FROM THEM. SEND A MESSAGE TO BALDAR. HE MUST BE TOLD THAT THEY HAVE AN ALLY — THE SORCERESS ELEKA.

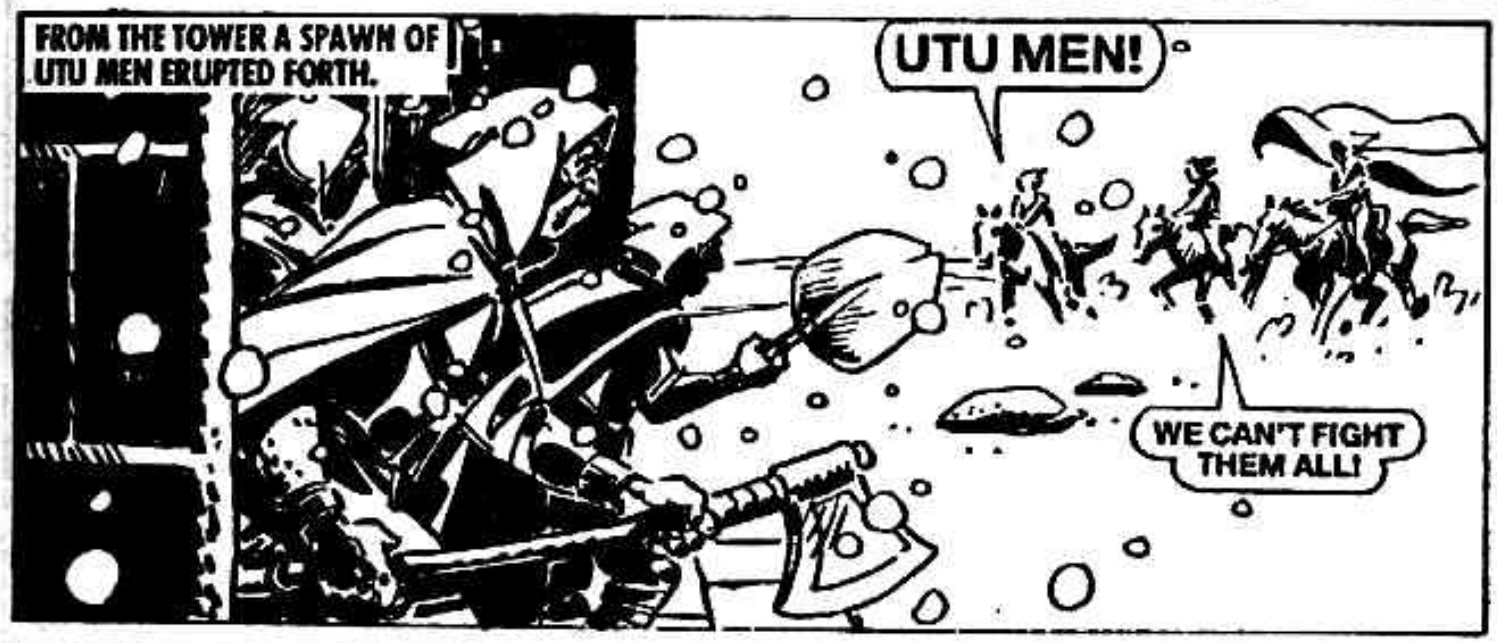
ALL IS NOT LOST — YOU WILL FIND THEM MY MECHANICAL FRIEND.
GO!

THE THREE RIDERS WERE HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS, FREEZING IN THE CONDITIONS.
THIS TRACK WILL LEAD US OVER THE MOUNTAIN. BUT BEWARE OF EO'S TRICKS. HE IS NOT A GREAT WIZARD, BUT HE IS A CLEVER ONE.

BEHOLD THE TOWER OF EO.

BUT THEIR WAY WAS BARRED—
BY THE DEMONS! WHAT IS IT?
A GUARD OF EO'S! IT IS DANGEROUS, BUT SLOW!
THEY SLIPPED PAST THE STRANGE CREATURE WITH BASE IN THE STORM.

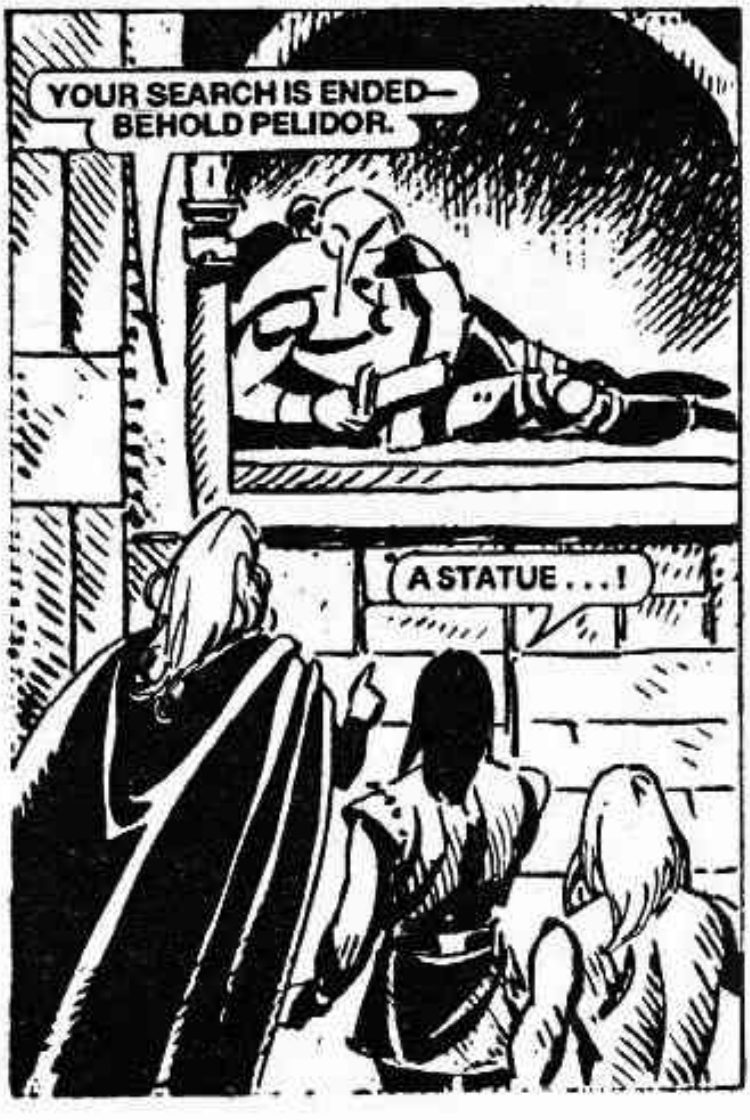
FROM THE TOWER, EO WATCHED THEIR APPROACH.
ELEKA! SHE COMES! BUT FIRST THEY WILL HAVE THE GUARD TO DEAL WITH.


FROM THE TOWER A SPAWN OF UTU MEN ERUPTED FORTH.
UTU MEN!
WE CAN'T FIGHT THEM ALL!

GO BACK FROM WHENCE YOU CAME — DEVIL CHILDREN.
ELEKA HURLED A HANDFUL OF SMALL BLACK PELLETS AT THE FEET OF THE UTU MEN.

THE PELLETS EXPLODED IN FLAMES—
AHHHH! MERCY!

ENTRY WAS GAINED—
TAKE CARE, JEDD. EO IS STILL ABOUT. HE IS LIKE A RAT WHEN CORNERED.


YOUR SEARCH IS ENDED— BEHOLD PELIDOR.
A STATUE . . . !

THEY GATHERED RESPECTFULLY AROUND PELIDOR. BUT IN THE SHADOWS EO WAS PREPARING TO STRIKE.
HE LIVES — BY EO'S MAGIC! BUT IT WILL TAKE ALL MY WITCHLORE TO REMOVE THE SPELLS WITHOUT KILLING HIM.
WILL IT TAKE LONG, ELEKA? HAGEN AND HIS BUTCHERS WON'T BE FAR OFF.
A WITCH-KNIFE FOR YOU, ELEKA.

YOUR SPELL-MAKING DAYS ARE DONE, WIZARD!

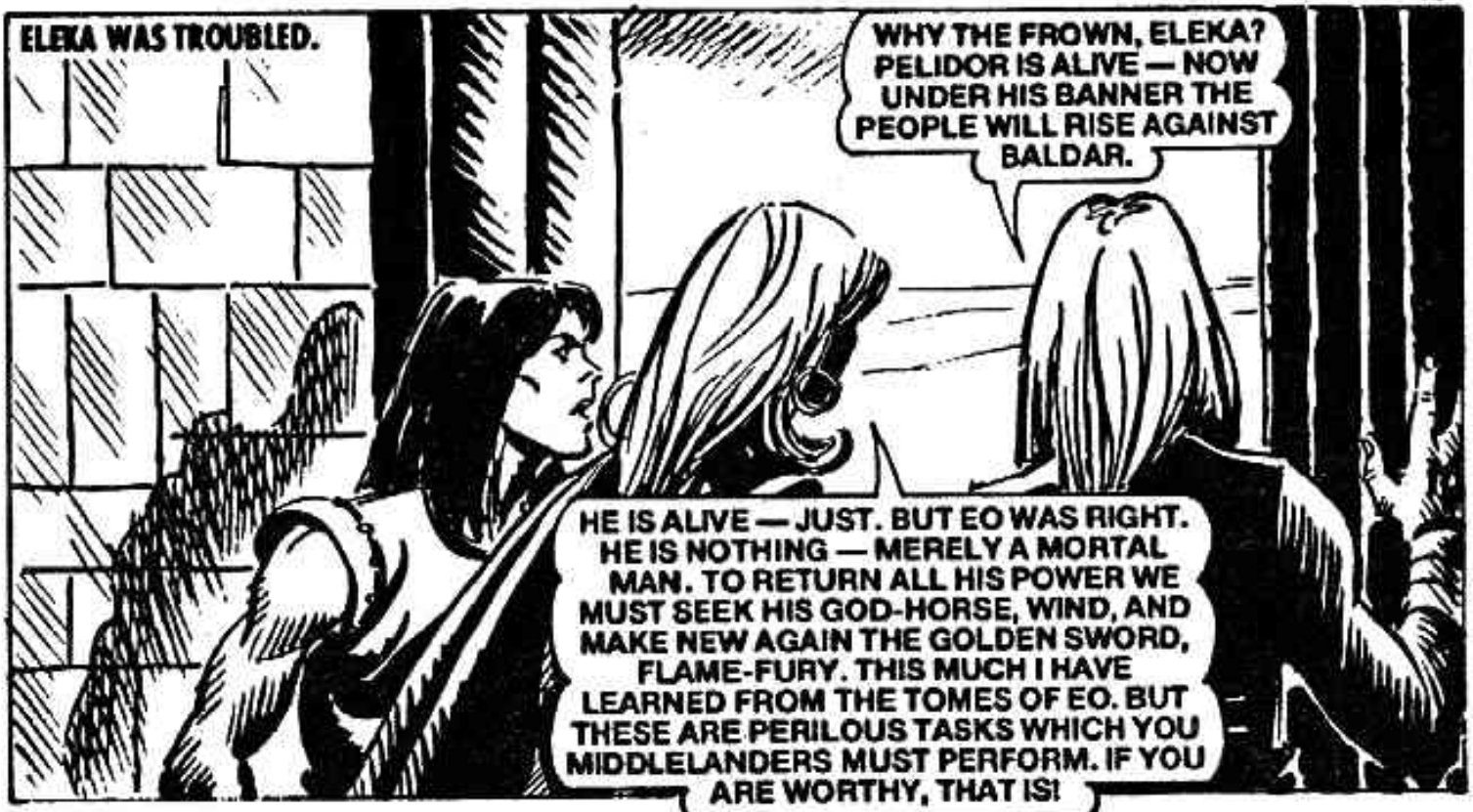
EO, MORTALLY STRUCK, WAS STILL DEFIANT.
WELL, EO. YOU HAVE BECOME CARELESS AND SLOW IN YOUR OLD AGE. BUT YOUR TIME IS NOW PAST. A NEW AGE IS DAWNING. WITH THE HELP OF PELIDOR . . .
YOU THINK YOU HAVE WON — FOOL. YOU HAVE ONLY HALF WON . . . PELIDOR IS NOTHING WITHOUT SWORD AND STALLION . . . FIND THEM IF YOU CAN . . . FIRE-COW!

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?
WORN OUT, THE YOUTHS SLEPT. AND WHILE THEY SLEPT, ELEKA WORRIED. IT WAS EARLY IN THE MORNING WHEN SHE FINISHED.
IT MEANS OUR WORK IS ONLY HALF-FINISHED! BUT FIRST I MUST BREAK THE SPELL OF STONE. IT WILL TAKE TIME. YOU TWO MUST WAIT OUTSIDE FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY. WATCH FOR HAGEN.
WAKE — IT IS DONE. THE STONE SPELL IS BROKEN. PELIDOR IS MADE FLESH AGAIN. YOU MAY ENTER.

JEDD AND TOBY CREPT SLOWLY UP TO PELIDOR — THE LEGEND THAT NOW LIVED.
HE SLEEPS?

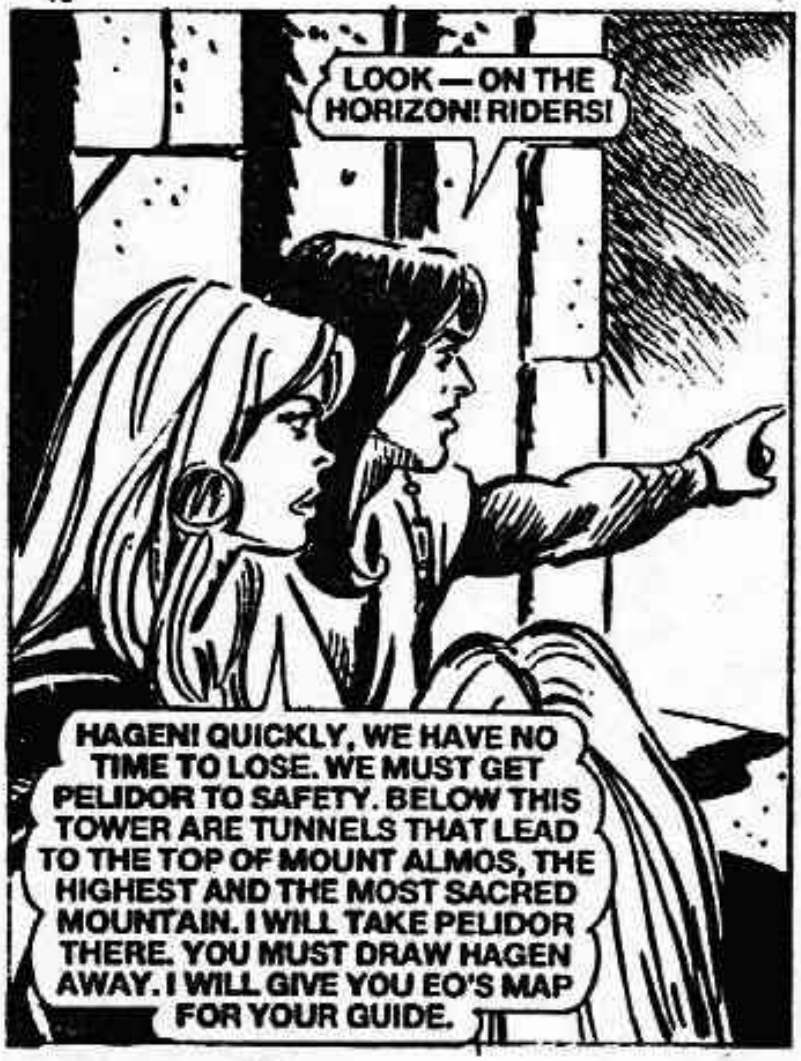
I HAVE SLEPT TOO LONG. ARE YOU TOBY OR JEDD?
T-TOBY, SIRE. THIS IS JEDD.

YOUR COURAGE HAS BROKEN MY ETERNAL SLEEP.
LET PELIDOR REST. NOW — HE IS WEAK, AND THERE IS STILL MUCH TO DISCUSS. AND WE DARE NOT TARRY IN THIS PLACE.


ELEKA WAS TROUBLED.
WHY THE FROWN, ELEKA? PELIDOR IS ALIVE — NOW UNDER HIS BANNER THE PEOPLE WILL RISE AGAINST BALDAR.
HE IS ALIVE — JUST. BUT EO WAS RIGHT. HE IS NOTHING — MERELY A MORTAL MAN. TO RETURN ALL HIS POWER WE MUST SEEK HIS GOD-HORSE, WIND, AND MAKE NEW AGAIN THE GOLDEN SWORD, FLAME-FURY. THIS MUCH I HAVE LEARNED FROM THE TOMES OF EO. BUT THESE ARE PERILOUS TASKS WHICH YOU MIDDLELANDERS MUST PERFORM. IF YOU ARE WORTHY, THAT IS!

FROM BENEATH HER CLOAK ELEKA BROUGHT OUT THE SWORD, FLAME-FURY.
BEHOLD THE BROKEN SWORD, FLAME-FURY. BUT THE SWORD CAN ONLY BE MADE GOOD IN THE FURNACE OF STELFAT THE BLACKSMITH WHO IS SAID TO LIVE AT THE MOUTH OF HELL. NOW WHICH OF YOU WILL GO?
I WILL!

WELL SPOKEN, TOBY. NOW JEDD, YOU WILL FIND WIND IN THE STABLES OF AUGOL, IN THE OWNERSHIP OF THE TWO-HEADED GIANT, CLAM. WILL YOU GO? OR ARE YOU AFRAID?
I AM AFRAID, BUT I'LL GO!


LOOK — ON THE HORIZON! RIDERS!
HAGEN! QUICKLY, WE HAVE NO TIME TO LOSE. WE MUST GET PELIDOR TO SAFETY. BELOW THIS TOWER ARE TUNNELS THAT LEAD TO THE TOP OF MOUNT ALMOS, THE HIGHEST AND THE MOST SACRED MOUNTAIN. I WILL TAKE PELIDOR THERE. YOU MUST DRAW HAGEN AWAY. I WILL GIVE YOU EO'S MAP FOR YOUR GUIDE.

WHILE ELEKA AND PELIDOR MADE GOOD THEIR ESCAPE IN THE TUNNELS, TOBY AND JEDD BURST OUT, HEADING IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS.
STELFAT IS TO THE EAST. GOOD LUCK, JEDD.
CLAM IS THE OTHER WAY! GOOD LUCK, TOBY.

LOOK! THEY ARE SPLITTING UP.
AYE, BUT WHERE ARE THE OTHERS? OUR SNOOPING FRIEND TELLS US THAT ANOTHER HAS JOINED THE RENEGADES. WEKA — SPLIT YOUR MEN AND BRING BACK THOSE TWO. THE REST TO THE TOWER.

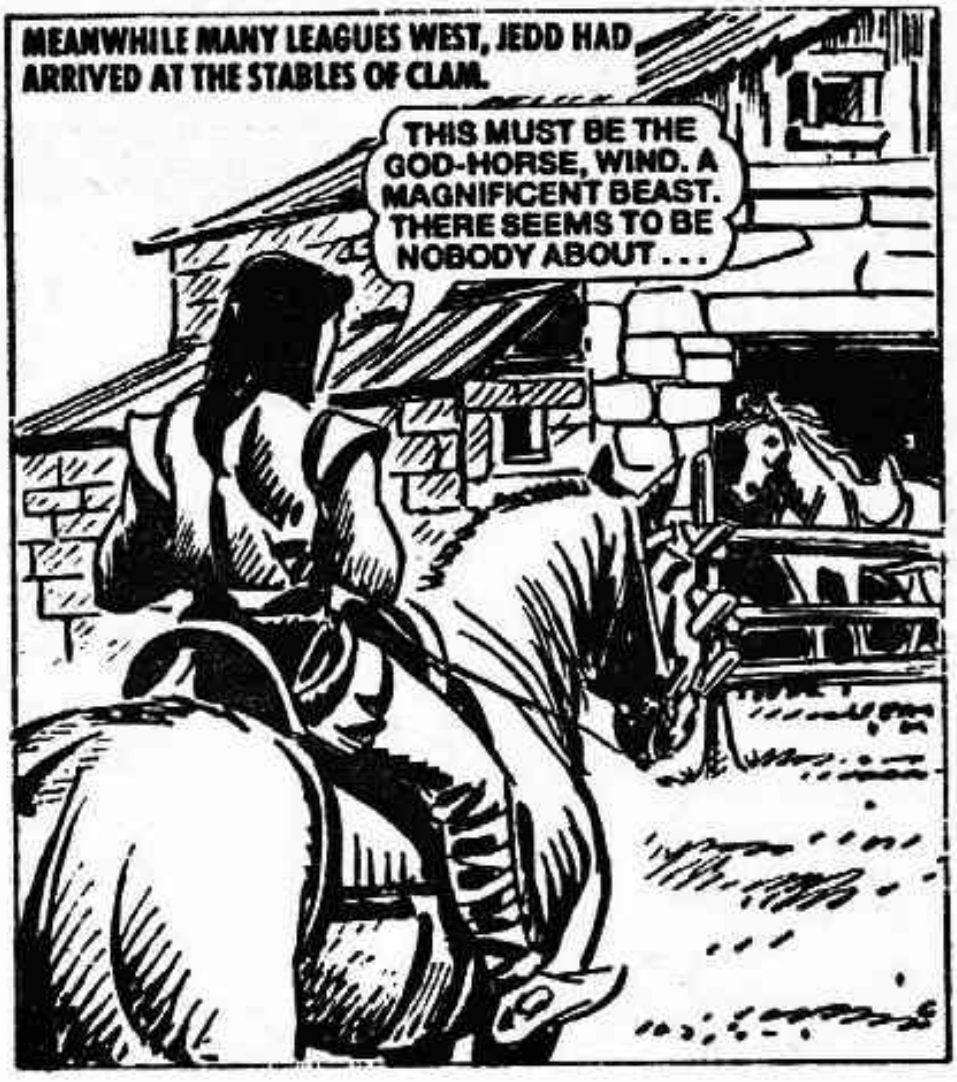
IS THIS THE WIZARD EO? HAH, DEAD AS MUTTON, IF IT IS. SEARCH THE TOWER FROM TOP TO BOTTOM.

TOBY RODE HARD AND LONG INTO THE NIGHT. BY MORNING HE WAS IN A STRANGE BARREN LAND OF FIRE.
YE GODS, THIS IS NOT A WELCOMING PLACE. BUT ACCORDING TO MY DIRECTIONS YONDER MUST BE STELFAT'S WORKSHOP.

TOBY CAUTIOUSLY ENTERED THE CAVE. FROM SOMEWHERE DEEP INSIDE HE COULD HEAR THE BOOMING SOUNDS OF A HAMMER. THE SOUND OF STELFAT.
I MUST BE IN THE HEART OF A VOLCANO. TRULY HELL IF THERE EVER WAS ONE.

I WONDER WHY ALL THOSE WARRIORS ARE HUNG UP LIKE THAT?
STELFAT, THE GREATEST BLACKSMITH IN ALL THE KNOWN WORLD. I BRING YOU THE WONDROUS SWORD FLAME-FURY FOR YOU TO MAKE AGAIN.
WELL, WELL, WELL. WHAT HAVE WE HERE. A FINE SPECIMEN.
FLAME-FURY! THE SWORD OF PELIDOR! I WILL RE-MAKE THIS WEAPON. BUT WHAT PRICE WILL YOU PAY, YOUNG MAN?
PRICE?

AYE, YOUNG BUCK. A PRICE. OR WILL YOU JOIN MY KNIGHTS OF THE WALL? THEY TOO COULD NOT PAY. YOU HAVE UNTIL THE SWORD IS GOOD TO FIND PAYMENT.


MEANWHILE MANY LEAGUES WEST, JEDD HAD ARRIVED AT THE STABLES OF CLAM.
THIS MUST BE THE GOD-HORSE, WIND. A MAGNIFICENT BEAST. THERE SEEMS TO BE NOBODY ABOUT . . .

YOU LIKE THAT HORSE, BOY?

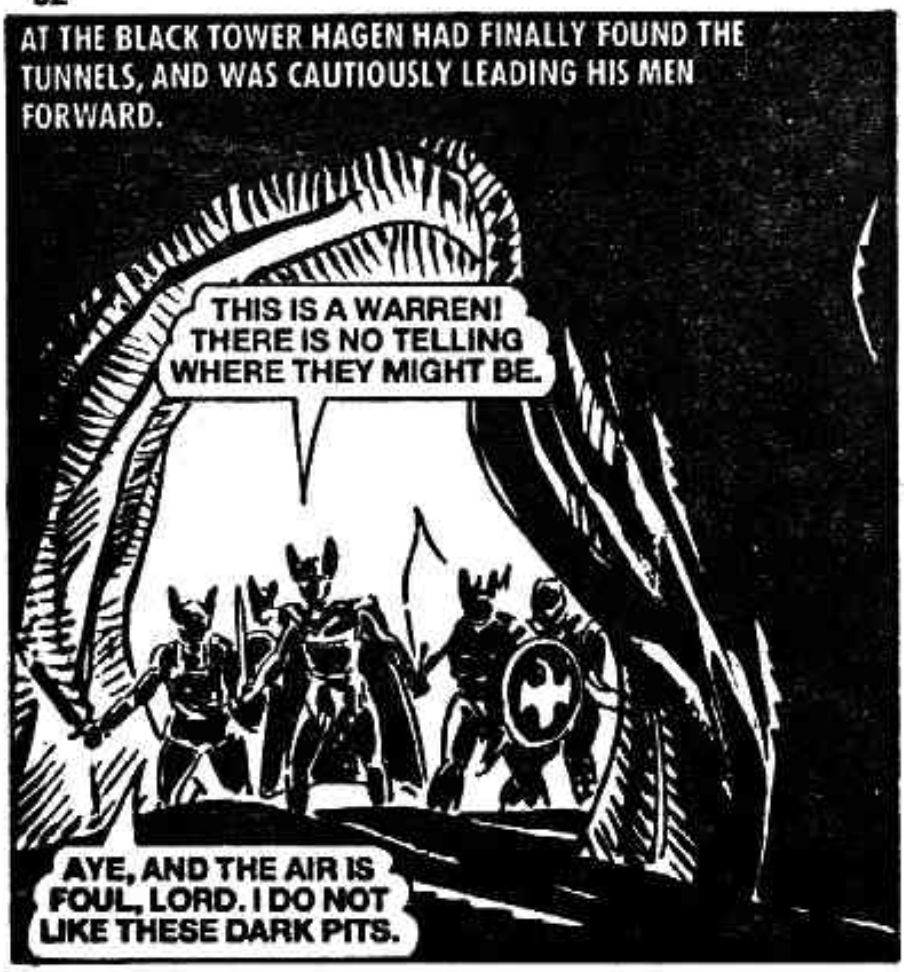
YES . . . I HAVE COME TO TAKE HIM BACK TO HIS RIGHTFUL OWNER.
HIS RIGHTFUL OWNER, EH? BUT PELIDOR IS DEAD! NOW I AM THE RIGHTFUL OWNER!

WITH A DECEIVINGLY SWIFT MOVEMENT CLAM TRIED TO END JEDD'S DAYS THERE AND THEN.
I'LL SPLIT YE INTO SPLINTERS . . .

I KILL YOU!
BUT THE FRIGHTENED HORSE REARED UP, STRIKING THE GIANT STONE DEAD.

EASY WIND, EASY. PELIDOR HAS NEED OF YOU.

THE GUARD! NOW I MUST MAKE HASTE. THERE IS NO TIME TO LOSE.


AT THE BLACK TOWER HAGEN HAD FINALLY FOUND THE TUNNELS, AND WAS CAUTIOUSLY LEADING HIS MEN FORWARD.
THIS IS A WARREN! THERE IS NO TELLING WHERE THEY MIGHT BE.
AYE, AND THE AIR IS FOUL, LORD. I DO NOT LIKE THESE DARK PITS.

NOW WHICH WAY?
TO THE LEFT, HAGEN. SEE, EMBERS FROM A BRAND — STILL WARM. THIS IS THE WAY.

FURTHER ON, ELEKA AND PELIDOR HAD REACHED THE END OF A LONG WINDING STAIRCASE. PELIDOR WAS COMPLETELY EXHAUSTED.
COME, CHAMPION. THE DOOR WILL LEAD US OUT OF THESE TUNNELS AND ON TO THE SACRED MOUNTAIN. COME.
I AM EXHAUSTED . . . I NEED . . . REST.

BEYOND THE OAK DOOR WAS A LARGE CHAMBER. IN THE PAST IT HAD BEEN USED FOR HUMAN AND ANIMAL SACRIFICE.
WE HAVE LITTLE TIME FOR REST. BUT IT IS PLAIN PELIDOR CANNOT CONTINUE. HAGEN'S MEN CAN ONLY COME UP THE STAIRS ONE AT A TIME. PERHAPS THEY CAN BE HELD BY FIRE UNTIL JEDD AND TOBY RETURN. BUT I WILL NEED TO LIGHT A BEACON ON THE MOUNTAIN FOR THEM TO SEE.

TOBY, HOWEVER, WAS STILL PONDERING HIS DILEMMA OF GETTING BACK WITH FLAME-FURY AND HIMSELF IN ONE PIECE. OTHER PROBLEMS WERE ON THE HORIZON TOO.
THE GUARD! DO THEY NEVER GIVE UP? BUT HOLD, THIS COULD CHANGE THINGS!

WELL, MY BOY. HAVE YOU DECIDED ON PAYMENT?
AYE, YOUR LIFE! FOR LESS THAN A MILE AWAY ARE A DOZEN OF BALDAR'S IMMORTAL GUARD. I WILL HELP YOU DEFEAT THEM IN RETURN FOR THE SWORD.

YOU DRIVE A HARD BARGAIN, BUT I ACCEPT.

THE ODDS ARE NOT GOOD!

LOOK OUT ABOVE . . .
AAAAARGH!

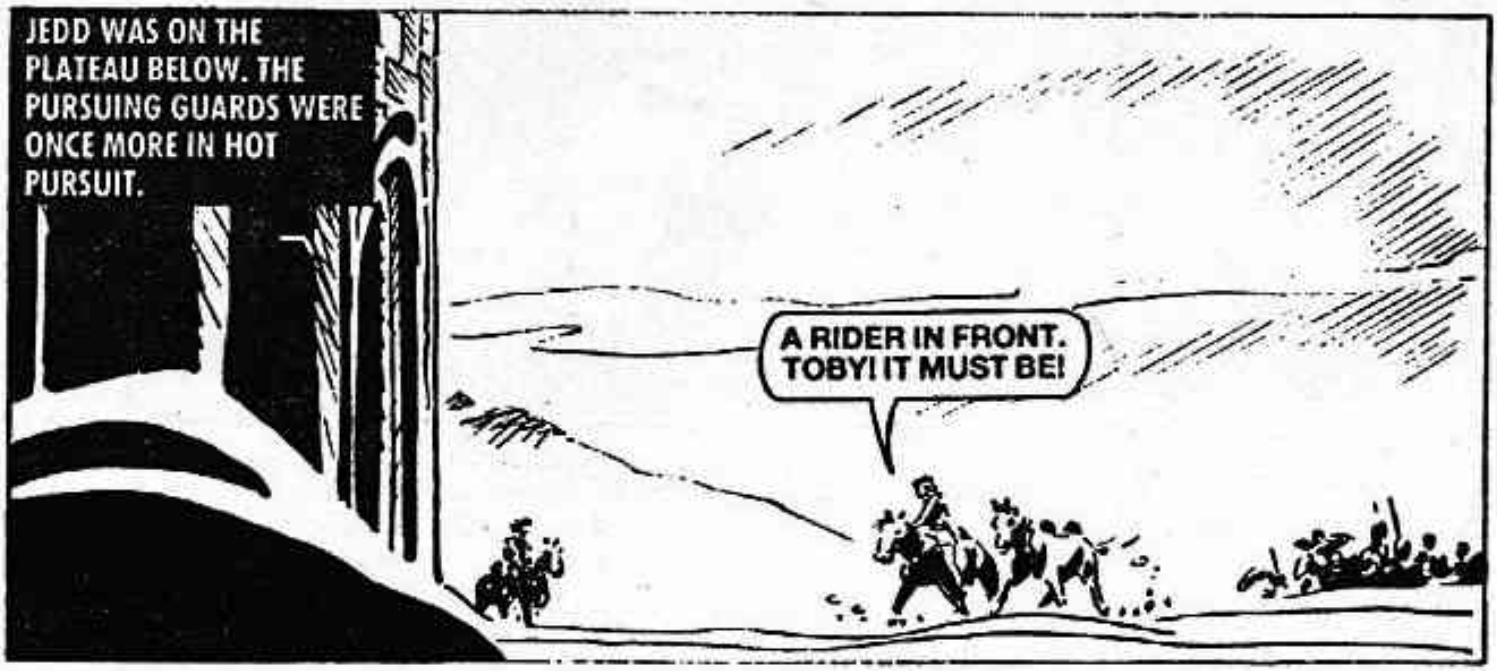
TOBY DIDN'T TRUST STELFAT AND WAS PREPARED TO RUN AT THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY.

NOW WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU ARE GOING?
OUR BARGAIN IS DONE.

YOU WILL LEAVE WHEN I SAY YOU CAN . . . AHHH!
THE NEXT BOLT WILL BE THROUGH YOUR HEAD. FARE THEE WELL.

MEANWHILE BENEATH THE MOUNT ALMOS, A BATTLE RAGED BETWEEN ELEKA'S FIRE AND THE IMMORTAL GUARDS' STEEL.
THAT FIRE-WOMAN IS HOLDING US BACK!
AYE, BUT SHE WILL TIRE SOON. THEN SHE WILL BE OURS.

ELEKA WEAKENS EACH TIME SHE USES HER POWER. SOON I WILL HAVE TO FACE HAGEN WITHOUT FLAME-FURY. SO BE IT.
IS THERE NO SIGN YET OF TOBY AND JEDD?


JEDD WAS ON THE PLATEAU BELOW. THE PURSUING GUARDS WERE ONCE MORE IN HOT PURSUIT.
A RIDER IN FRONT. TOBY! IT MUST BE!

THEIR REUNION WAS BRIEF —
LOOK ON MOUNT ALMOS — IS IT A SIGNAL?
IT MAY BE! WE WILL HAVE TO CHANCE IT — WE CAN'T STAY HERE. THE GUARD GET NEARER. COME ON, TOBY!

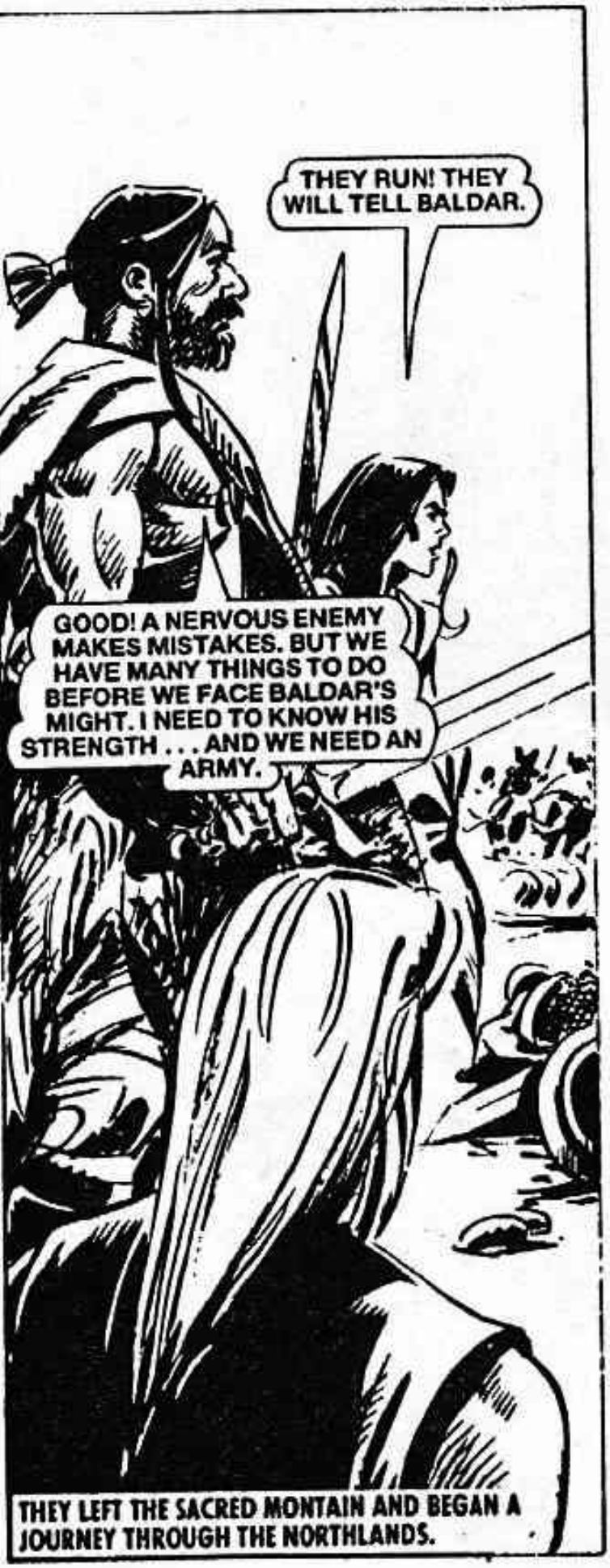
HAGEN'S MEN HAD FINALLY BROKEN INTO THE CAVE. ELEKA WEAKENED BY HER EXERTIONS, COLLAPSED.
IS THIS WHAT ALL THE FUSS IS ABOUT? HAH, TAKE HIM ALIVE, MEN. BALDAR WILL WANT TO SEE HIM. BUT KILL THE WITCH!

TWO OF THE GUARD RUSHED PELIDOR, WHO, ALTHOUGH STILL WEAK, WAS STILL GOOD ENOUGH TO DISPATCH ONE —
DIE, SCUM!

TOBY AND JEDD SUDDENLY BURST IN —
LORD, YOUR SWORD.

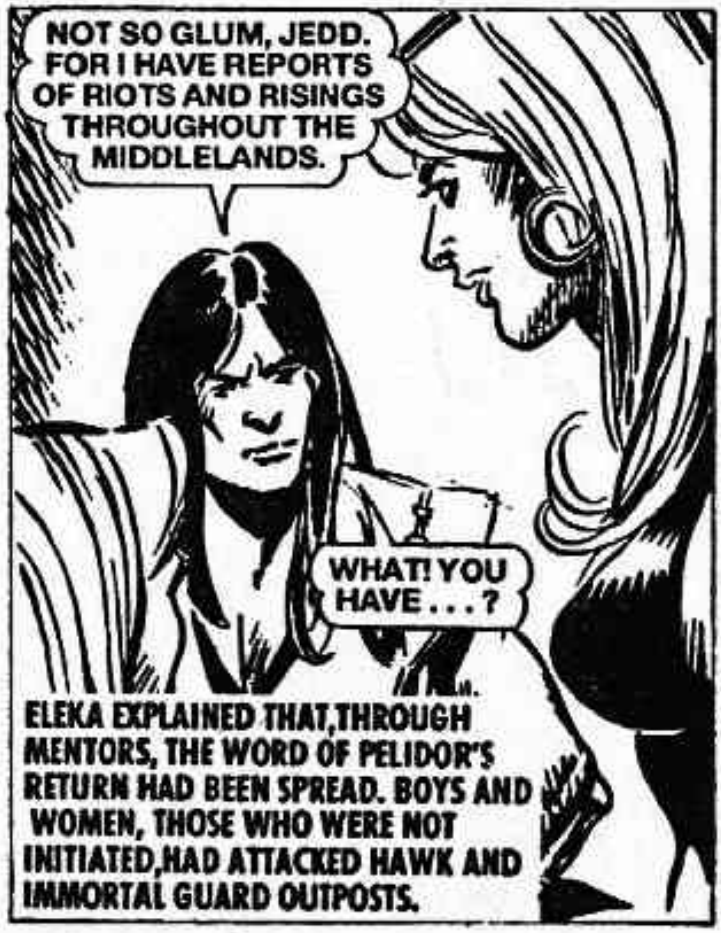
FLAME-FURY! AND WIND, MY STALLION! AT LAST I AM WHOLE. HAGEN PREPARE FOR THY DEATH!
IT IS ONLY A SWORD. MERE STEEL. AT HIM!

HAGEN COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MORE WRONG. THE SWORD, HORSE AND MAN WERE THE TRINITY OF POWER THAT WAS LIFE AND LIGHT TO THE ETERNAL CHAMPION.
AHH! MERCY, LORD!
THERE WILL BE NO MERCY FOR THE LIKES OF YOU!
FINALLY ONLY HAGEN WAS LEFT STANDING.
YOU FIGHT WELL, BUT I WILL KILL YOU!
I THINK NOT!


THEY RUN! THEY WILL TELL BALDAR.
GOOD! A NERVOUS ENEMY MAKES MISTAKES. BUT WE HAVE MANY THINGS TO DO BEFORE WE FACE BALDAR'S MIGHT. I NEED TO KNOW HIS STRENGTH . . . AND WE NEED AN ARMY.
THEY LEFT THE SACRED MONTAIN AND BEGAN A JOURNEY THROUGH THE NORTHLANDS.

THE NEWS OF THE RETURN OF PELIDOR QUICKLY SPREAD. IN EVERY VILLAGE AND EVERY TOWN PEOPLE FLOCKED TO FIGHT UNDER HIS BANNER. PRINCES AND OTHER NOBLES VANQUISHED BY BALDAR'S ARMY JOINED THE CHAMPION.
I AM PRINCE FARAH OF CUSPAR, WE HAVE JOURNEYED MANY LEAGUES FROM THE EAST TO JOIN YOU. WILL YOU LEAD US?
AYE, BRAVE PRINCE. I WELCOME THE WARRIORS FROM THE EAST.

THE ARMY GROWS, JEDD. MEN JOIN FROM THE NORTH, EAST AND WEST . . . EVEN FROM THE PARCHED DESERTS THEY COME.
TRUE, BUT NONE FROM THE MIDDLELANDS. THEY REMAIN. THEIR MANHOOD DESTROYED BY THE INITIATION.


NOT SO GLUM, JEDD. FOR I HAVE REPORTS OF RIOTS AND RISINGS THROUGHOUT THE MIDDLELANDS.
WHAT! YOU HAVE . . . ?
ELEKA EXPLAINED THAT, THROUGH MENTORS, THE WORD OF PELIDOR'S RETURN HAD BEEN SPREAD. BOYS AND WOMEN, THOSE WHO WERE NOT INITIATED, HAD ATTACKED HAWK AND IMMORTAL GUARD OUTPOSTS.

BUT FIRST THEY HAD TO DEFEAT AN ARMY THAT BALDAR HAD SENT INTO THE NORTHLANDS TO WIPE OUT PELIDOR.
MOST OF THEM ARE UNTRAINED PEASANTS. THIS WILL BE TOO EASY FOR ME, KON-LOK THE BOLD.

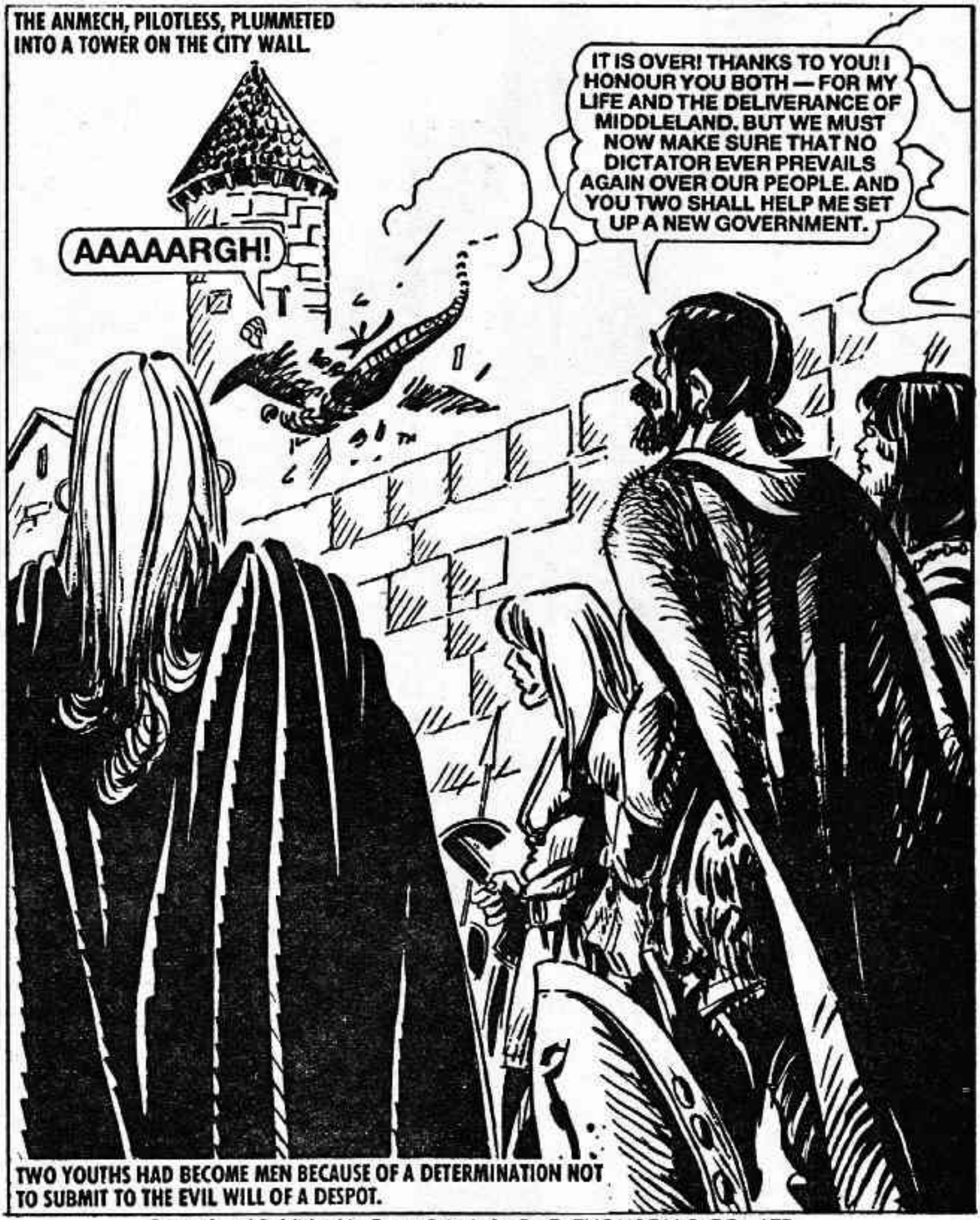
THE BATTLE, HOWEVER, DID NOT GO AS PLANNED.
HE IS A MADMAN — NONE CAN FACE HIM!
COWARDS! HOLD THEM, I SAY.
THE DAY IS WON!
MANY THOUSANDS OF HAWKS WERE SLAIN, EVEN MORE TAKEN PRISONER, MANY PLEDGING ALLEGIANCE TO PELIDOR.

NEWS OF THE DEFEAT REACHED BALDAR IN THE CITY OF LUSHUAI.
KON-LOK'S ARMY IS DESTROYED, YOUR GREATNESS. PELIDOR'S ARMY IS ONLY FIVE LEAGUES FROM THE CITY, ONLY YOUR OWN IMMORTAL GUARD REMAINS LOYAL.
WHAT! I AM SURROUNDED BY COWARDS AND TRAITORS.

LORD, THE NEUTRALISATION MACHINE — IT IS DESTROYED. THE MIDDLELANDERS ARE IN REVOLT!
NO! I MUST GET AWAY! PREPARE MY PERSONAL ANMECH — AND QUICKLY.

INTO THE CITY RODE PELIDOR, GREETED THERE BY MIDDLELANDERS NOW FREED FROM THE YOKE OF BALDAR.
LOOK, TOBY! THE MENTOR!
WELL DONE, MY LADS, I KNEW YOU WERE THE MEN FOR THE JOB.

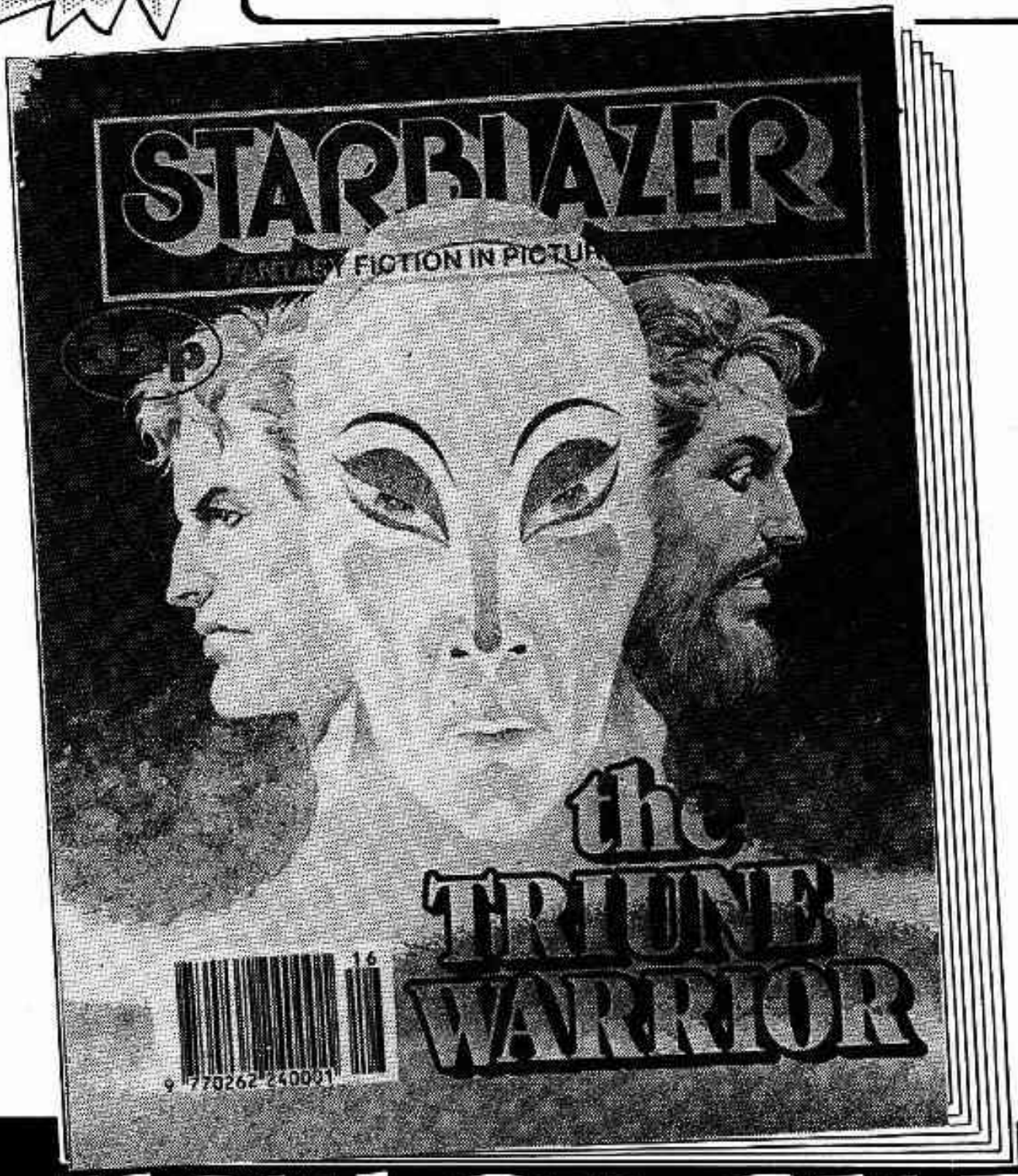
THE FIGHTING WAS NOT YET OVER. OUTSIDE THE PALACE THE LAST OF BALDAR'S IMMORTAL GUARD PREPARED TO FIGHT TO THE LAST. WHICH WAS MORE THAN BALDAR WAS PREPARED TO DO.
THE GUARD FIGHT WELL, BUT FOR NOTHING.
LOOK! UP ABOVE. BALDAR'S CONDOR ANMECH. HE IS ESCAPING.
TOBY, WE CAN'T LET BALDAR ESCAPE!
SEE, SOLDIERS OF BALDAR. THIS IS HOW YOUR BRAVERY IS REPAID. YOUR LEADER RUNS LIKE A CUR.
TOBY AIMED, FIRED AND HIT THE PILOT—
AAAAARGH!



Printed and Published in Great Britain by D. C. THOMSON & CO., LTD.,
185 Fleet Street, London EC4A 2HS. © D. C. THOMSON & CO., LTD., 1990.

DON'T MISS

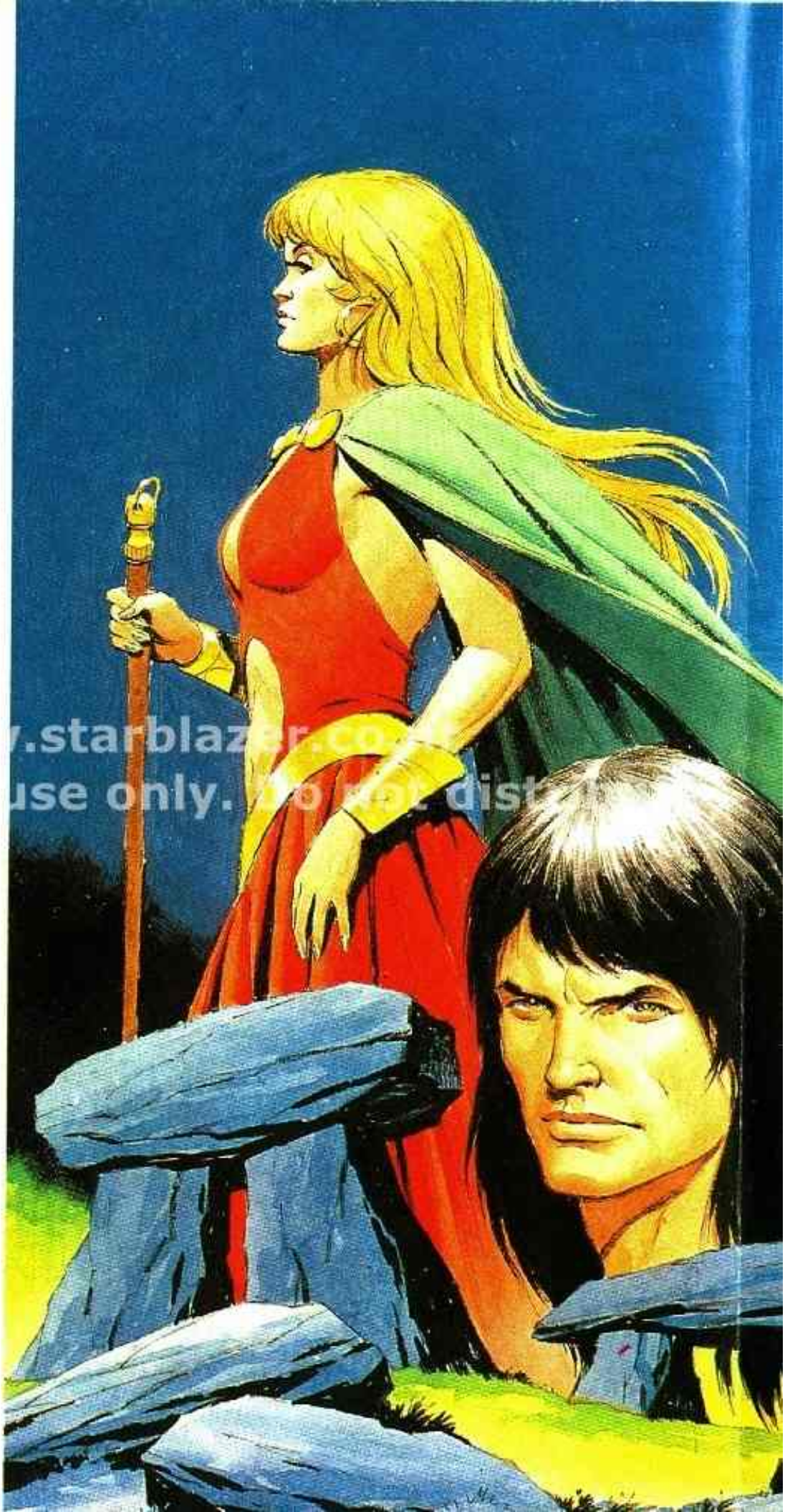
THIS MONTH'S OTHER ACTION-PACKED ADVENTURE



NOW ON SALE

THE WARRIOR QUEST

It was almost that time! The time dreaded by the young, but merely accepted with a shrug of the shoulders by the not-so-young. It was the time of the taking when birdmen sent by their barbarous leader, Baldar, swept down on the outlying vilages to take the young men into slavery. Two youths, Toby and Jedd, decided that a life on the run was preferable to a life under the yoke . . . so they plotted to escape. When an aged wise man appeared and filled their heads with the legend of the warrior Pelidor, the two set out on a quest — pursued by a murderous horde bent on their destruction.



www.starblazer.co
use only. Do not dist